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PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE MICHIGAN SCHOOLMASTERS CLUB

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT FROM THE SIDE OF SOCIAL LIFE

THE impression is strong with me that I shall not lead this discussion quite in the direction which you expect, but wherever I go, believe me, it will be with honest conviction based upon many years' experience in dealing with young people.

There are really two distinct sides to this question : the first, that which relates to social functions in connection with school management — which side I shall treat but briefly.

The schools, which we in this assembly represent, divide naturally into two classes ; those of the smaller places, where the relation of the high school to the natural social condition of the town is close ; and those of the larger cities, in which the life of the high school is in itself a thing apart from the social groupings, which claim our pupils in their daily life outside. In the smaller towns, the school, like the church, is a center of much of the social life of the place, and the high-school teachers are looked upon as a definite and important part of that life. In such a place, school socials, exhibitions, and various other meetings that the social instinct of the teacher may suggest, are often a means of bringing together discordant elements and they offer, in a social way, many opportunities to the tactful teacher of settling difficult problems in the matter of school management. I can go back now in remembrance to various such opportunities offered me in my earlier experience in smaller towns, and can find instances where a wise use of a few moments informal meeting with a pupil made right a previous strained relation in school. But all this, mind you, was possible because it resulted naturally from the inevitable conditions of the place.

In a city, the conditions are different. Its social life is entirely separate from school. Boys and girls meet with us every day who never see the inside of each other's homes, who meet nowhere else, and between whom social relations, in the usual acceptation of the term, would be not only forced but uncomfortable to all concerned. There

is no necessity for a high school in a city to take upon itself the establishing of social functions. Our greatest trouble is not in furnishing to our pupils sufficient social life, but in restraining them from the over abundant opportunities offered in the outside surroundings which we cannot control. In the main, I do not believe in any school gatherings which call the young people out of their homes in the evening, for I am unwilling, in a city, to take that responsibility upon myself. Neither do I think it wise for a teacher dealing with pupils from all grades of society to assume the responsibility of forcing acquaintance in a social way when he must needs work in the dark, and may never know what elements he is bringing together. For my part, I am unwilling thus to risk tangling the threads of fate.

There are one or two formal social gatherings which have long held in most of our cities—markedly, the senior reception given each year by the juniors to the graduating class. From year to year, it has grown more and more elaborate, more and more a society affair. It has arisen so gradually and seemingly so naturally that we have taken it as a matter of course. I have studied it closely, but have not yet come to final judgment as to the wisdom of it. As a social affair, it is a success; it certainly has its influence in strengthening class spirit; and it leaves a pleasant remembrance of the later school days. The expense is getting to be a serious question. It is paid for by a tax upon the junior class, and sometimes this tax seems too heavy upon individuals.

Let me repeat—in a smaller place, social functions and school life run naturally into each other, and parents, pupils, and teachers in the ordinary course of events, mingle together. In a city, such commingling is unnatural and impossible, and so much of the social life that is, perhaps, desirable and useful in a small place is, in a city, forced and may become harmful.

This brings me to the second view of the question. There is an honest, natural, social side to school life, and one which grows out of the daily work and daily association of teacher and pupils, and which is, to my mind, a most important factor in high-school management.

“Society is the relationship of men to one another when associated in any way.” Whether a high school number 50 or 1500, we have a definite number of young people grouped together for a definite purpose and consequently thrown into definite social relations. A part of our duty, and sometimes I think the most important part of our duty, is to teach these young people to live acceptably and worthily in their

relations to their fellows. To my mind, no school is properly organized which does not recognize and emphasize these social relations. In fact, the whole question of school management is practically settled when the right social basis is established, using the term social, of course, in the sense in which I have defined it.

Society gives liberty under law. The liberty which school law should establish is the liberty to which each student has a right—the liberty to do his own work without interference from his comrades. To make this possible, students must be trained to respect the rights of others, to be thoughtfully considerate of their associates, with an occasional recognition of the fact that the teacher is also human, a member of the same social body, and so worthy of an occasional thought.

To bring about this condition of affairs, the elements of self-government and self-control, must be made prominent. I honestly believe that much of the trouble in school discipline comes from the habit of treating pupils too much like children. I know this is true in high schools, and I am inclined to believe that there is some degree of truth in the statement, even in the lower grades.

Let me illustrate. Most teachers are in the habit of striking a bell or of asserting themselves in some way to call a school to order. Some years ago the question was borne in upon me, "Why should I, in a high school, find it necessary formally to call a school to order?" The pupils are there for a definite purpose; it is for their good, not mine, that they take their seats at a certain time and begin work. In the morning, the school room should always be a workroom in which each pupil can always have the privilege of uninterrupted work, otherwise there is no reason for his coming. At noon, the case is a little different, for with our two sessions and a large number of pupils coming from a distance, they must be left some liberty for recreation, but at one o'clock they should resume work. It often hurries me unduly to be back at the building at that time. Thinking the matter over, I could see no reason why the school should not come to order just as punctually without me as though I were there, and I determined to try the experiment. My worthy then principal whom I consulted, assured me it could never be done, and that the trial would result only in failure. But I could not give it up. It seemed right and based on right principles of self-government, although, perhaps, somewhat Utopian. I put the matter before the school; they saw it as I did; we tried it and it was a success. This was five years ago and the desk bell has never been used since. Not that the school is always as quiet when I step into the

room as it may be a few minutes later ; not that schools in different years respond equally well, but they mean to do it, the responsibility is consciously upon them where it should be, and it gives them one lesson in self-government. If they do not always come to order promptly as they should, they fully realize that they are the ones who have failed in duty, not the teacher.

This is but one instance of the way in which responsibility should be put upon young people. Each school will offer its own opportunities, and the teacher should be ever alert to seize upon them.

There is still another phase of social life as regards school that I wish to emphasize. The opinion is often current that the manners in a schoolroom should be peculiar and schoolish. Such has been the custom far too long and it is time to call a halt. The social usages that dominate the best society should be preëminent in every school.

The teacher in charge of young people in a high school stands in the relation of host or hostess to them. Let me discuss this part of the question from the woman's standpoint and whatever I may say can easily be translated to apply equally to the men who stand in similar relations to school management. For the time being the schoolroom is the teacher's home and the standard which a true hostess should set for herself is none too high. Does this seem farfetched ? I have not found it so and I conscientiously try to hold myself to this standard.

Let us examine some of the things demanded of a good hostess.

In the first place she must set her house in order. She will give to it the best possible appearance consistent with her circumstances. No home is in good taste that is not in harmony with the financial state of the owner and with the life there lived. No schoolroom is in good taste that is not left perfectly harmonious with school life. Much has been written and more said upon the subject of decorating schoolrooms ; much has been done and overdone in this direction. Not that any schoolroom has ever been made too beautiful, but many teachers, in attempts at decoration have crowded their rooms and covered their walls with things that have no place in a schoolroom.

No matter how humble the room, how poorly furnished, one element of perfection can always be attained—that of cleanliness and attendant order. The teacher in charge is responsible for this condition. We complain sometimes of our janitors, thinking they should do more, but they are usually poorly paid and overworked, and when most willing and efficient, there is always something left for the teacher to do. Young people are careless and often untidy, and the example of

an orderly teacher moving quietly about the room, putting things in place here and there will have greater effect than much speaking. To pick up some scattered paper from the vicinity of a boy's seat, just as a lady would do in her own home, will have far more effect upon the boys in that vicinity than any order from the schoolmistress that some boy should do it as a penalty for his carelessness. It will not take many repetitions of this bit of housekeeping to make all watchful, not only for any untidiness about their own seats, but there will grow up a general pride in the daintiness of the room, and it will not be an unusual sight to notice a boy or girl picking up scattered paper or bits of chalk without ever thinking who made the disorder. When this condition is reached, the pupils know something of their general duty to a social body.

The manner in which a teacher dresses is not without importance as a social factor in school management. No one should ever appear other than carefully dressed as well as in perfect keeping with the occasion. Returning to the simile of the hostess, remember it is her duty never to be dressed markedly better than her guests. A teacher should be so attired that the poorest pupil in her room may feel that with care she need never feel unpleasantly conscious of her clothes. We live in a workaday world, and the clothes we wear should be workaday clothes. This does not stand in the way of their being artistic, dainty, and perfect of their kind, but it should bar the wearing in school of all such material as will not be suitable for the hard wear. It should bar all elaborately made clothes and all useless ornament. This will leave you not only a compact looking, well dressed woman but the woman best dressed for the occasion. The silent teaching of such a toilet will eventually eliminate all bedecked and beribboned girls and will put in the place of flummery the kind of clothes of which a girl becomes entirely unconscious, and that is the perfection of dressing.

Again, we cannot be too careful of the code of manners which we demand in a schoolroom. Young people who are elsewhere courteous, considerate, and on the whole well-mannered, too often think it not worth their while to use their best manners at school. I have discovered boys who would never think of standing in the presence of a lady upon whom they were calling, with their hats on, yet who, in the hall of a school building, will calmly put their hats on their heads and swing on their overcoats without even thinking they are committing a breach of etiquette. When this state of things continues, it is because the teacher in charge does not insist upon the same code of manners

in the schoolhouse that any lady should expect from the guests whom she receives at her own home; with this difference, that her position makes it possible to offer suggestions that she might not feel at liberty to offer in general society. The courteous question "Shall I take your hat?" is usually sufficient, and one such reproof reaches many boys.

In the same connection, this year has developed an interesting struggle between myself and my school. Early in September I discovered that it never entered the heads of most of my young people to say "Good morning," to me if they met me in the halls or in the schoolroom. The matter amused me a little so I went quietly to work, speaking to each of them by name when I met him face to face just as I would have greeted him on the street or in my own home. It took several months to accomplish the task, but as I told them a few weeks ago, they now say not only "Good morning," but "Good morning, Mrs. Milner," which was what I was struggling for.

Examples might be multiplied without end, but time presses, and enough has been said to illustrate the one thought that I wish to press home.

With the right man or woman in charge of our young people, the social standards of a school will be right. Unless these are right, our work will be largely futile and the tares of false personal relations will choke our intellectual wheat. The old notion that a teacher is on one side of a question and the pupils on the other will never disappear until your school is organized upon the basis of natural relations.

Test the attitude of your pupils toward you by some of your young acquaintances outside of school. If you find a trace of difference in the way in which they and your students meet you, there is still much for you to do.

A teacher stands in the presence of a school to serve not only the school as a whole but to minister to individual needs. Until your school feels this and you can see in every casual glance that meets your eye, a close human sympathy, you have not solved the social problem set before you. When that condition is reached, your schoolroom will be your home where it is your pleasure to receive these eager young people who are seeking your help. You will see them day by day grow gentle voiced, gentle mannered, considerate of each other and of you, while day by day you can lay aside more and more of the visibly authority that former conditions compelled you to use.

One other thought and I am through: Some persons can produce

these desirable results entirely by means of personal influence. Young people are hero worshipers, and will do almost anything that is the will of their idol. Your personality may be a legitimate power to use at first, but if you depend upon this influence for government, the effect will be enervating. All action to which one is impelled from without is more or less false. Our final duty high-school work is to teach our students through that social body, to prepare themselves for worthy membership in the world's wider social life. To do this you must guide direct, and advise, but you must be able eventually to slip your supporting hand from beneath your swimmer and see him cleave the waters alone.

FLORENCE MILNER

Grand Rapids, Mich.

DISCUSSION

HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

No theme presents so many phases of thought which bear directly upon the success of high school-work, as the one under consideration. The papers presented upon the following phases of the subject—morals, athletics, and social life have dealt with them in a broad, comprehensive, and practical way. I can merely touch upon a few salient points during the five minutes allotted me.

The need of teaching morals in our schools is apparent, not only from the standpoint of the individual and the community, but also from that of the state. The state of Michigan practically says to her teachers, "Come with me into our penal and reformatory institutions and learn one of the lessons of the hour. Behold here prisoners; many with trained intellects and deft fingers, but lacking moral character to hold mind and body under proper subjection. The state says further: In return for the thousands of dollars paid annually into the school treasuries of Michigan, I have a right to demand of the schools that kind of training which will not only render our institutions safe, but will also advance them along all moral lines.

One of the points made by the paper on athletics was the need of proper food for all students, including those under special training. I like that word *all*. Physical training in the main has only benefited the few, and these from the standpoint of strong bodies have needed it least of all. The problem now is how to secure proper physical training for the ninety and nine who need it most. The solution of this vexed question depends upon properly equipped gymnasiums for both sexes. This means a competent examiner as well as instructor and compulsory attendance of all students upon the exercises. This is the great need of our high schools as well as our colleges and universities. While a friend to athletics properly carried on, I am forced to believe that our high schools cannot afford to send their clubs to other cities

to play, returning long after nightfall when temptations assail and overcome so many who are all right at home.

The topic of proper food for students is one that commends itself to the good sense of all who have had any experience in high schools. The student needs a different breakfast from a farmer. The brain needs albuminous food for its nutrition.

The discipline of the school must conform to the true idea of the school itself. If "the school is an organized sacred unity," then the kind of discipline should be that which fits each member for filling his place in the best sense of that term.

The responsibility for lessons and proper conduct in high school should rest largely with the pupils, if the best training for citizenship is to result. If, as Matthew Arnold asserts, conduct is three fourths of life, the schools should recognize their opportunities and untiringly work for that quality of character which crowns the noblest citizenship.

S. B. LAIRD

SUPERINTENDENT OF LANSING SCHOOLS

MORALS

The question of moral training, or of teaching morals in the high school, is one which comes with startling force to every thoughtful teacher.

In the discussion of this subject, however, I do not intend to say anything in regard to the *direct* teaching of religion in our high schools.

In what *does* moral training consist? If not in regular didactic teaching upon religious questions, in what more effective way can it be accomplished than by the teacher's influence upon the pupils?

Who, beside the teacher in the high school, has such a fine opportunity to help the rising generation to become *men*, true men, not finely-formed or well-trained physical machines. To be sure, physical strength and health come from manhood, but they are not manhood. A man is not a well-adjusted, well-trained intellectual machine. Reasoning, imagination, and memory are good tools of manhood; but no one of these, nor all of these can make a man—a man with a knowledge of what is right or wrong, and force of character enough to do the right, under all circumstances.

And it is just here that one of the finest points of a teacher's work is brought to light, just here that the influence of the teacher may tell for the best advantage, not by the lessons that he may speak, nor by the lessons that he may act, but by the lesson that he may *be*.

Someone has compared this unspoken influence of the teacher, to the great forces of nature that work so silently, "with no jar as the world turns on its axis, or no creaking of the machinery that lifts the tides." And then adds that "God's greatest forces are always silent."

This brings home to each one of us, as teachers, the solemn responsibility which rests on us, especially in regard to the teaching of morals.

In thus building the character of his pupils, the teacher ought to bear constantly in mind that the object of all discipline and training should be to produce a self-governing being, not a being to be governed by others. Teach them to obey, to do the right under all circumstances, whether any personal good is involved or not. For "he that ruleth his spirit, is better than he that taketh a city."

Let every teacher inspire his pupils with a noble purpose in life. Have your pupils, in this thoroughly worldly age, understand that there are other things in life beside money-getting, that it is not what a man *has* but what he *is* that makes the man.

Teach the boys and girls under your charge to be faithful so that whatever they do, may be done thoroughly and well. Teach them to be faithful in regular and prompt attendance upon school, and have them understand how much the habits of regularity and punctuality thus acquired, will mean to them in the business world.

Inspire in your boys and girls a love for home and country. I never knew a boy who loved his home and parents, and to whom it was a pleasure to respect and obey his parents, who ever brought grief to his home or dis-honor to his family. The love of country is interwoven with the love of home. The love of home makes stronger the love for the government that protects the home.

Find out what your pupils are reading and influence them, so that they will choose for themselves books that are good, and there will be no desire nor inclination for the evil.

As you influence them to choose good *books*, so, also, can you help them to choose good friends. We have all seen young people lifted and inspired to the noblest thing because they chose for their associates, those who were pure and good. And we have also seen others started in the downward course which proved the ruination of their lives, by the choice of evil companions.

Let the teacher, by his own example, by precept, and by his treatment of certain incidents which occur in school life, teach justice, generosity, benevolence, honor, patience, and forbearance. For in the exercise of these virtues is again shown the character and disposition of the teacher.

So much for *what* is to be taught. The next vital question is, *How?*

With all that is required of every teacher, how can time be found for inculcating in the pupils those sterling qualities which are requisite characteristics of evry true man or woman?

This is not so difficult a matter as it may seem. For there are but few days in the history of a school when an opportunity for giving important and positive moral instruction is not afforded. A remark upon a paragraph in reading, or upon a fact in history may lift the whole class to a higher plane of thinking and acting.

The surest way to keep our boys and girls from evil, is to fill their minds

with that which is good and beautiful. Is there any better way for accomplishing this than by having them commit to memory choice passages of prose and poetry, which express the very principles we would have appear in their lives?

In Mr. John Fiske's lecture on Daniel Webster, he makes the statement that probably a majority of those who fought for the Union in the Civil War had, as boys, learned and recited in school, portions of Webster's reply to Hayne. And is not our literature stocked with expressions which will instill in our pupils the strongest love for our own, our native land?

History—ancient, mediæval, and modern—is full of examples of heroism and bravery, which arouse in every boy the desire to perform deeds, the equal of those he is reading about. The class recites the story of that little band of Spartans, who stood their ground and fought as men never fought before, for their homes and the land they loved so well; and what boy is there whose eyes will not kindle, or whose heart will not glow with lofty purpose and ambition, as he reads how they gave up their lives, for their country's sake.

And turning to the history of our own country, we see one of our national heroes, when the nation's heart was rent asunder, when his own party and his own friends forsook him, standing alone and enunciating those principles which he knew to be in keeping with the divine will, and eventually even giving up his life, a martyr to the cause of slavery.

There is not a boy nor a girl in our broad land today but feels the inspiration of such a life and such a man as that.

Ruskin says that as we would hang fine pictures on the walls of our homes, and collect rare and costly treasures for the decoration of our rooms, so we should store our memories with the choicest and best in art literature and the sciences.

To sum up, I think that the most effective method of moral training must supply an "atmosphere of right thinking and right doing, and must establish a disposition to oppose wrong and uphold right."

But far above all other influences for moral training in our schools, is, as was said at the beginning of this paper, *the personality of the teacher*.

It is the teacher who puts his whole soul into his teaching that writes his own earnest words upon and into the lives of those who are placed under his care. This is especially true in the teaching of morals, where the scholar must be made to feel that the teaching is not one of duty, but right from the heart.

We are told that what influenced the boys at Rugby, was not the school nor its influence so much as it was the wonderful power of the man Arnold. It may not be granted to any of us, to be the inspiration to good that Arnold was, but we may all have the spirit which caused him to say, "My object will be, if possible, to make *Christian men*."

FLORENCE BARNARD

MT. CLEMENS, MICH.

HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT WITH RESPECT TO PHYSICAL EXERCISE

THE following is an extract from the paper read at the Schoolmasters' Club, April 2, 1898.

EXERCISE IN GENERAL

Physical exercise has always formed, and always will form, a large part of the life of all living creatures. The necessity of daily bread is the cause of a great blessing to man and beast. To be active is to live; to be indolent is to die.

The amount and kind of exercise needed depends upon the nature of one's daily occupation, and the habits one has formed from his youth up. The history of our schools shows us that the subject of physical exercise needs our most careful and thoughtful attention. It is the duty of every superintendent, principal, and teacher to care for the physical, as well as the mental growth of every student. What suggestions can be given to better the present state of affairs? I offer one for your consideration.

I should like to have put into the hands of every boy and girl entering school, a card, or booklet, containing printed directions on five main points in the line of instructing them how to live and move and enjoy their lives. (1) On the living rooms: the cleanliness, dryness, heating, and ventilating of. (2) On habits: regularity in retiring and rising, meals, study, cleanliness and tidiness of person, social duties, and exercise. Habits should be shown to be great educators in themselves, to say nothing of their power as great character builders. (3) On exercise. This is of prime importance. Upon it must the robust student depend for a continuance of good health, and the frail body hang its hope for future strength. (*a*) Instruction should be given on how to obtain exercise in one's own room. For instance, the use of dumb-bells, flat-irons, or large books; the use of two chairs as horizontal bars; movements of the body in almost countless ways; the striking bag, pulley weights, and Indian clubs, all of which may be made of crude material, at a slight expense. (*b*) Careful instruction should be given in the use of a gymnasium, and in taking out-of-door exercise. Exercise, like many other good things, is the source of much harm if not carefully, thoughtfully, and systematically taken. Occasionally going to a gymnasium and using every piece of apparatus until one is worn out, or exhausted, is not exercise. Every gymnasium should be in charge of a competent instructor. Neither is it exercise to take a long run, as a cross-country run, or a hare-and-hound run, unless preceded by much previous training. Very forcible instruction should be given on the effects of exercise upon the heart; surely this is of vital importance. Much harm is done at the beginning of every football, baseball, and track season by attempting to do too much the first week or so. The same may be said of running up stairs, riding a bicycle rapidly up a steep incline, and stopping suddenly after violent exercise, as well as beginning suddenly after a

long period of rest. (4) On baths. Bad results often follow violent exercise because no attention is paid to the care of the body. This is even more important than the exercise itself. The important baths of the student are the quick sponge bath, and those taken daily by the use of a flesh brush, or coarse towel. (5) On food. Instruction as to the nature and function of food should be given. The great body of teachers are just waking up to the fact that food plays an important part in the education of the child. The student should know the kind of food best suited to his mode of life. The athlete should know the kind best suited to him when pursuing a certain line of physical training.

EXERCISE IN PARTICULAR

In nearly all schools, the chief exercise, outside of walking and bicycling, is found to be in athletics, so-called. By athletics we generally mean football, baseball, tennis, track, and field sports. Since these forms of exercise often play a conspicuous part in the life of the school, they should be under the control and guidance of older and more experienced persons than the students themselves. It is the duty of every principal to attend to this matter. I propose the following scheme for the control of athletics. (1) Every school shall have an athletic association. (2) Every school shall have a board of control of five members, three of whom shall be chosen by the corps of teachers from their own number. This board should have absolute control of all athletics, and should receive power from the board of education to punish any violation of the rules governing the control of athletics. (3) If the high-school athletic association and the board of control can be assisted by the coöperation of the athletic authorities of the university, we shall have athletics completely under control.

The connection between the schools and the university is a vital one. Let this connection be shown in athletics. As the university advances in the quality and purity of athletics, so will the high schools. Young men whom the boards of control have termed unfit for school athletics should not, as a rule, be accepted by the university board. I think it proper and highly beneficial to all concerned that the latter should ask a young man to bring a recommendation from the board of control in his respective school.

The benefits arising from the control of athletics may be seen from three standpoints. (1) The control of athletics is a benefit to the student, because, in order to participate in any contest, he must be doing passing work in his studies, and he must conduct himself as a gentleman in going to, returning from, and while on the field of sport. (2) It is a benefit to the school, because a school can have no better reputation than that its students are fairly intellectual and are gentlemen wherever they are found. (3) The control of athletics will be a benefit to the university. Scholarly and gentlemanly athletes developed in the high schools will furnish scholarly and gentlemanly athletes in the university. The control of athletics will be an incentive for the best

men to develop in those branches of athletics in which they are most needed in the university. If our university is to keep up its fine record, and especially to keep up the pace Chicago and Wisconsin are setting for her, she must begin to train her athletes in their earlier school life.

LOUIS P. JOCELYN

ANN ARBOR, MICH.

THE TEACHING OF HISTORY.

The question before us for discussion today necessarily involves the question of method. It is not so very many years ago that there was no question of method in history teaching. All did exactly the same way; a text was selected, the pupils committed it to memory and literally recited it to the teacher. Now this way of doing has one very powerful thing in its favor. It is very easy for the teacher, and in spite of all that has been said and is being said in these later days about teaching, I venture the assertion that much more than a half of the history teachers are still doing no differently. It is true they have sought to enrich the rather plain tune a little by introducing a few flourishes and variation, but the old tune is still the foundation of all. The conception of history work that underlies this way of doing is perfectly evident. The pupil is to *learn* history, and we all know what it is to learn a thing. How many of us have got beyond this conception of history teaching?

While I was still a student, and before I had ever taught, I began to hear of a new way called the topical method. My first acquaintance with this was on the off side, so to speak, the side that the teacher never sees, and I suppose it must have been owing to my immature years that I was always amused at the seriousness with which this method was advocated. Not to consider it now, however, I only wish to add that, although it was an effort to get away from the routine of the text-book, yet the real conception of the character of the work was not changed.

Of course the modern fad is the source method. Of it one thing must be said: it is an absolute departure from the old conception of history work. Nothing is more certain than that the student cannot *learn history* by this new method. Yet this method has a purpose which is a long way in advance of the idea it replaces. Let its author, Mrs. Sheldon Barnes, speak for herself. If a man wanted to write a history of England, he would go to the original sources, to the old records, despatches, letters, reports of debates, chronicles, laws, and treaties, etc., and as he went along he would note down all the things he found, as material for his history. This is abridged from the preface of one of her books, and she adds: "Now this book is not a history, but a collection of historical materials; it contains just the sort of things that historians must deal with when they want to describe or judge any period of history." Using Greece as an illustration, she tells her pupils, "you

must imagine that you yourself are to write a Greek history, or that you are a Greek citizen called upon to judge the life about you." While I have not intended to discuss especially the source method, yet it will help us to our further purpose if we ask here two questions: (1) How far will the method accomplish its expressed purpose; and (2) how far is that purpose the true one of historical work? If we had time to discuss carefully and settle in our own minds this second question, the method of teaching history and the use of material would hardly need further attention. But now let us see how the source method works. The very first topic which Mrs. Barnes takes up in the book, from the preface of which I quoted above, is the history of Egypt. To this whole topic she gives twelve pages; five of these are devoted to extracts. None of the extracts are long. The first is the most considerable, and is an extract from the Book of the Dead. The next longest one is a prayer of Sennacherib in battle. It is evident that these, the two most important passages, give not one single fact of Egyptian history, and, moreover, they are meaningless to a reader who does not already know Egyptian history. If a historian were to write a history of Egypt, do you think he would do so from the study of a half-dozen or so short and poorly selected extracts, and these in translation, not in the original, and so translated that the native flavor is almost entirely lost? Or have you considered the effort of imagination that would be required for the student to consider himself an Egyptian citizen and endeavor to judge of the life about him? What is true of Egypt is true of every other topic treated in Mrs. Barnes' book.

Is this the fault of Mrs. Barnes or of the method? I have lying here as I write a pamphlet by Professor Caldwell, of Nebraska. It is headed "Slavery in the United States; Selections made from the Sources." These selections cover over eighteen pages, and I am frank to say that if the pupil were to know no more about slavery than he could learn from these selections, he would know nothing at all about the subject. But this source method as it is promulgated by its various advocates always has another part to it. The extracts given are in every case accompanied by a set of questions. In Mrs. Barnes' books these questions are very skillful and very ingenious. No others are so well done. The answers to them are expected to be obtained as inferences from the extracts given. But the material for these inferences as given in the extracts or anywhere in the text is entirely inadequate. The inferences are not warranted by the facts produced. The real student of history would never think of drawing conclusions from such slender evidence. Instead of being, then, a proper historical training, this method trains to the very thing the historical student should not do, and tends to produce just the wrong attitude of mind towards the material with which he has to deal.

One of the greatest difficulties the teacher has to deal with in the conduct of his classwork is to repress the tendency to hasty conclusions on the part of his pupils, a tendency that this method systematically cultivates.

It is impossible to illustrate this point without taking more from the usual books on this method than can be given here, but the reader has only to turn to any of the usual texts, take almost any of the sets of questions usually given at the end of each division and refer them carefully back to the material upon which they are based, to realize how utterly inadequate that material is. Questions are sometimes asked, or sets of questions, that would require, for the possibility of a proper answer, more material than the whole volume would contain, and yet are questions based only on a few pages.

Nothing could be more complete than the failure of this method to accomplish the purpose expressed by Mrs. Barnes in the portion of the preface quoted. Is it a lack of knowledge on the part of the teachers of what is implied in good school-keeping or a lack of experience in scholarship, that they have given it such serious consideration? To gather the history of a period from the literature and documents of that period is a long and laborious task such as no pupil in our high schools is equal to. If any teacher does not understand the significance of this statement let him try a little work of this kind for himself. He will soon understand the character of the source method.¹

Having seen now what the source method will not do, what is it that we wish to accomplish in the teaching of history? What is its purpose, not its remote purpose as a study of the curriculum, but the immediate purpose of the class room? History, of course, deals with people and among every people, things are constantly being done, events are occurring, and the number of these is enormous; so great, in fact, that they cannot be recorded, and if they could it would be impossible to study them. Only a small proportion are matters of record, but these recorded events are the facts of the historical student, the material upon which he must labor. His task is by no means a simple one. If the time is a remote one, and all historical study must be of a time more or less remote, he must from the comparatively meager facts before him try to reconstruct the period, reproduce, in his own mind at least, the thought, the feeling, the mode of action, the motives, the ideals and aspirations, the conduct and the habitual course pursued under various conditions, class relations, class movements, etc., of the period, and he must do this to a certain extent, at least, before he can understand a single one of the things he has to deal with, an institution, an event, or any of the facts that he finds existing. History has almost always been race movement, a process, a going forward, or a going backward, and this process always reveals the working of certain principles of development; it proceeds according to certain laws. To understand these and see their workings, different times must be compared; to be

¹ A class made up of teachers in the schools of this city, took up the study of the colony of Virginia last October. They did more work a great deal than a class in school could have done, and by the first of May had not covered the first twelve years of Virginia history. Even their much desired material could not be found in the city library.

compared they must be understood, and this understanding is possible only so far as the student can reproduce their life in his own thought and feeling. The extent of success in historical study then is the extent of interaction between the mind of the student and the period he is studying. He may learn a thousand facts of a given period, but unless this reproductive process has gone forward in his consciousness, he cannot be said to know any history, and his historical judgment will be correct in just so far as his own processes are complete. Facts in themselves are nothing and of no importance. It is only so far as they are held together in the matrix of an experience common to the student and the race life he is studying that their relation is seen and they are given significance.

It is this interaction then between the student and the period of study that constitutes the immediate and constant purpose of class method. We may study the life of a given time as a whole, or we may study aspects of it, our purpose is always the same, and with this definite purpose in view we must shape our methods accordingly.

Let me attempt to specify some of the things that are necessary to reach this result.

1. This result is absolutely impossible without a great body of facts, of definite specific detailed facts, with regard to the period studied. Of course any facts will not do. The time and the capacity of the child to hold a body of facts in mind are both always limited, and the facts must be selected and put together in such a way as to reveal the situation as fully as possible. In this respect our teachers and our text-books err sadly. The books do not supply us with the facts, and the teachers fail to supplement them properly. What they give us are general statements about conditions, or conclusions drawn, or supposedly drawn, from a study of details. What the pupil wants is not these general statements; he wants material for the exercise of his own judgment, these are the judgments. They may be, and if from careful students are, of greatest value to the teacher, but the student can only commit them to memory which is entirely superfluous labor.

Let me illustrate by the simplest kind of an example. It would be a perfectly correct statement for a text-book, and of the kind usually given, to say that the Plymouth colonists dealt wisely and justly with the Indians. But that is not the statement of a fact in the sense meant above. It is a conclusion drawn from a study of facts. What are the facts? I have not time to give them here as they should be given. But they should include such items as the finding of some Indians' buried corn and the subsequent payment for it, the story of Squantum, his supposed murder, and the prompt steps taken to avenge his death, the treaty with Massasoit, the father of King Philip, the message to the Narragansetts, and the vigorous measures taken with Massachusetts. When these facts are fully before the pupil, the value of the judgment given above is evident to him. It has meaning and is vivid. Before it was meaningless and I am free to say useless, unless,

indeed, which is quite possible at the proper stage of teaching, it is treated as a fact of a different order and is brought into relation with other like facts to give significance to a higher text.

2. Thus proper class work in history will deal with a multitude of details. What is to be done with this detail? How will it be handled in the recitation? Shall it simply be committed and recited? Shall the pupil *learn* it? The real purpose of a recitation is entirely different from this. If the pupil is studying a given period the aim is for him to get some conception of the character of that period. For this reason the facts are brought forward, and the purpose of the recitation is to make them reveal the situation. They should be wisely chosen and carefully marshaled, and when their purpose is accomplished their importance ceases. They should never be committed; not only is committing a waste of energy needed in other directions, but it hinders the real purpose of the work. When facts are so marshaled under a great idea as to make that idea at once comprehensive and significant, they have come into an entirely new condition which makes committing unnecessary. Each has become the part of a great whole which, when the mind has once grasped, it will securely hold. Moreover, to give an idea of clearness and fullness, a great mass of detail is necessary, which, when the idea is once comprehended, must necessarily be dropped out of the way.

3. The teacher himself needs to get his attention away from the idea of reproduction as the requirement of the recitation. He must turn his main attention from the facts to the intellectual processes of the pupils. His interest is not in their statements as statements, but in seeing how far they have caught the spirit of the passages and grasped the significance of the events they are telling about; how complete is the interaction. If the teacher has never conducted any experiments in this line, he has yet to be astonished at the amount of ignorance a pupil can cover up under the phrases of a glib recitation.

4. What shall be the sources of the material for class work?

This will differ somewhat with the stage and character of the work. For ordinary history study in the high school, such as the usual course in English or American history, a properly selected text-book is the best possible source. If it is a good text-book and has been wisely prepared for the use of classes, and the class is in the hands of a wise teacher, the text-book has advantages over any other source of material and has no drawbacks. It always needs supplementing, however by at least illustrative matter. Though no attempt should be made to study from original sources, yet original matter becomes the very best possible illustrative material, and in fact for reaching certain most desirable results is absolutely indispensable. But such material needs to be carefully selected with reference to the needs of the text, and carefully fitted in its proper time and place and connection with events. For example, when a class has gone over the beginnings of the movement that led to the founding of Massachusetts, the pupil might read Rev. John White's

writings on the subject. When it has studied the first twenty or twenty-five years of the colonial history and learned something of the law's and customs, let them read a few selected pages, taken in succession, of the record of the Massachusetts general court; if towns have been studied about, a few pages of some of the most ancient of New England town records. If the difficulties of the voyages, and of migration have been dwelt upon, some of the extant journals, Higginson's or Winthrop's, etc. But to state such cases as this makes it evident that the material for such work is not now published in available form for class use, and every text-book, and, in fact, every teacher, would need a different set of selections to accompany the class work. Perhaps the time is not far distant when the larger schools will provide funds for printing such supplemental matter as the conduct of the history classes makes desirable.

When a class is more advanced and especially if it is studying only one phase of historical development, such as constitutional history, for example, it needs no text-book. It can draw its material from the general or special histories, and, if it is dealing with institutions, every available document should be studied directly.

WEBSTER COOK

DETROIT HIGH SCHOOL

ELECTIVE WORK IN THE HIGH SCHOOL COURSES. —SHOULD ELECTIVE WORK BE PROVIDED AND ENCOURAGED.

It is the purpose of this paper to introduce the subject of electives in the high school, to present some facts kindly furnished the writer by superintendents and principals throughout the state in answer to seven questions, and to point out some more or less obvious deductions from this correspondence.

Naturally there is quite a difference of opinion among educators of good judgment as to the advisability of offering optional studies, or as to the extent to which substitutions should be allowed. One superintendent in the state says, "We do not think it is necessary to have substitute studies. It gives poor students a chance to form bad habits from frequent changes, and good ones do not need it."

Another superintendent, in a system of schools where an elective course is offered, says, "I am decidedly in favor of electives within bounds. I think it is a cruel wrong to many girls to force them through certain studies, such as geometry and mathematical physics. Many a boy that would shine in a shoe factory or grocery store is spoiled by a diet of Latin for which he has no taste or digestive organs. We have been blindly following the traditions for gentlemen's sons in England,